

Benton County

Contact: Nancy Farmer, Virginia Gay Hospital Home Health Agency 319-472-6360 nfarmer@vghinc.com

Community Health Needs Assessment Snapshot

Promote Healthy Behaviors

Problems/Needs:

- Underage drinking and substance abuse ranks as the number one concern at a stakeholders meeting of 26 community leaders and service providers. Benton County Youth survey substance abuse data indicates for 11th grade students completing the survey, 78% report easy access to alcohol, 75% report easy access to tobacco and 62% report easy access to marijuana. All of these rates are above the state rates.
- Nutrition concerns, obesity, and healthy eating habits were identified as the second most significant concern among the 26 member stakeholders who analyzed county health data. The 2009 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance data for WIC children indicated a rise of 2.3 % for overweight children age 2 thru 5 and an increase in obesity among the same ages and time frame of 0.4 % over 2008 data. Adult obesity rates for Benton County are now nearly equal to the state of Iowa rate at 28% and 28.5 % respectively. In 2005, the Benton County rate was below the state rate.
- Community resource information is not readily available to either professionals or the public with regard to what resources are available in the community and contact names and numbers to seek assistance.

Prevent Injuries

Problems/Needs:

- Number one reason for local emergency room use in Benton County is lacerations.

Protect Against Environmental Hazards

Problems/Needs:

- Lack of financial resources to assist with lead abatement for privately owned homes.

Prevent Epidemics and the Spread of Disease

Problems/Needs:

- Lack of local free STD testing particularly for teens, including prevention and education. STD rates for Benton County noted to be rising.
- No local OB-GYN delivery services. Local hospital does not routinely provide delivery service.

Prepare for, Respond to, and Recover from Public Health Emergencies

Problems/Needs:

None identified

Strengthen the Public Health Infrastructure

Problems/Needs:

- Lack of available, economic public transportation services throughout the county. Transportation is available on scheduled routes and with a fee attached to smaller communities.
- Lack of knowledge of community resources available to both providers and the general public. Stakeholders meeting discovered services are available in the community and they were not referring individuals due to lack of knowledge of services.

Community Health Improvement Plan

Goal	Strategies	Who is responsible?	When? (Timeline)
Decrease the number of 11th grade students who report having consumed alcoholic beverages by 5%.	Provide educational material to the middle school teaching staff for use in the classroom.	Area Substance Abuse Council	School year 2011-2012
	Promote high school student participation in the Above the Influence Coalition at all three school districts in Benton County.	Area Substance Abuse Council	June 2011
	Expand current outreach activities throughout the community in support of abstinence for everyone under age 21.	Area Substance Abuse Council	July 2011

Goal	Strategies	Who is responsible?	When? (Timeline)
Decrease the rate of childhood obesity by 1% over the next five years.	Complete the IWALK project with the Vinton/Shellsburg school district.	Benton County Public Health and Vinton/Shellsburg school district	2013

Goal	Strategies	Who is responsible?	When? (Timeline)
Provide current, accurate information to health professionals and the general public regarding available services/resources to meet health needs of the community by 2011.	Establish relationships with variety of media outlets to keep resource information available to the public.	Benton County Resource Coalition	July 2011
	Update resource guide annually at regular coalition meeting in January.	Benton County Central Point of Care	July 2011
	Format resource guide for local reps to update annually and print as needed with web site access on the Benton County web site.	Benton Development Group	July 2011 and annually thereafter